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Message Text

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ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 NEA-10 ISO-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01

PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-15 AID-20 OMB-01 ACDA-19 DRC-01

/176 W
---------- 023977
R 061630Z SEP 73
FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3113
INFO AMEMBASSY RABAT
SINT ALGIERS 2107
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USINT CAIRO
USUN NEW YORK 565

C O N F I D E N T I A L TUNIS 5201

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, TS/ XI
SUBJECT: CALL ON FONMIN SECRETARY GENERAL MESTIRI:
BOURGUIBA'S TRIP TO TRIPOLI

1 DURING CALL ON FONMIN SECRETARY GENERAL MESTIRI
SEPT 6 LATTER EXPRESSED VIEW THAT BOURGUIBA'S VISIT TO
TRIPOLI AUGUST 31 - SEP 2 HAD BEEN HELPFUL IN PACIFYING
QADHAFI. MESTIRI SAID THAT QADHAFI WAS PLEASED THAT
BOURGUIBA COULD ATTEND THE INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATIONS,
ESPECIALLY SINCE SADAT WAS NOT PRESENT. BOUGUIBA AGAIN
MADE A STRONG CASE TO QADHAFI THAT ARAB UNITY IN ANY FORM
CAN ONLY COME IN STAGES AND THAT QADHAFI SHOULD NOT
EXPECT UNITY OF ANY KIND TO OCCUR FOR SOME TIME. MESTIRI
ALLEGED THAT QADHAFI THIS TIME SEEMED TO ACCEPT THIS THESIS.

2. ACCORDING TO MESTIRI, QADHAFI HAS BECOME SOMEWHAT
DISENCHANTED WITH IDEA OF LIBYAN-EGYPTIAN FEDERATION,
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HAVING SENSED FROM HIS RECENT VISIT TO EGYPT THAT MOODS

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OF TWO COUNTRIES ARE POLES APART. FOR EXAMPLE, EGYPTIAN INTELLIGENSIA IS ON QUITE DIFFERENT WAVELENGTH FROM QADHAFI'S SOCIALIST-REFORMIST PLATFORM. FURTHERMORE, IT BECOMING INCREASINGLY EVIDENT TO QADHAFI THAT LIBYA LIKELY BE ABOSORBED BY EGYPT AND RISKS LOSING ITS SOCIALIST-REFORMIST IDENTITY.

3. MESTIRI SAID THAT TUNISIAN GOVERNMENT IS GREATLY RELIEVED THAT LIBYAN-EGYPTIAN FEDERATION HAS NOT MATERIALIZED BECAUSE TUNISIAN WOULD CONSIDER THIS A POTENTIAL THREAT TO ITS INTEGRITY FOR THREE REASONS: (1) IT WOULD PUT EGYPT ON TUNISIA'S BORDER; (2) IT WOULD BRING THE ARAB ISRAEILI CRISIS CLOSER TO TUNISIA, AND (3) IT ALSO WOULD BRING SOVIET INFLUENCE CLOSER. MESTIRI SAID THAT TUNISIA HOPES TO TURN QADHAFI'S ATTENTION TOWARD A CONSTRUCTIVE RELATION-SHIP WITH TUNISIA AND ALGIERIA, ITS WESTERN MAGHREBIAN NEIGHBORS. MESTIRI SAID THAT ALGERIAN-TUNISIAN RELATIONS ARE CURRENTLY EXCELLENT AND BOTH ALGERIA AND TUNISIA HAVE COMMON INTEREST IN ENGAGING QADHAFI IN CONSTRUCTIVE COOPERATION.

4. MESTIRI STATED THAT MOROCCO IS LESS IMPORTANT TO TUNISIA SINCE IT IS NOT A NEIGHBOR. BUT TUNISIA DESIRES GOOD REALTIONS WITH MOROCCO AND IS CAUGHT BETWEEN QADHAFI'S DESIRE TO SUBVERT THE HASSAN REGIME AND THE ALGERIAN DESIRE THAT MOROCCO REMAIN STABLE.

5. MESTIRI DID NOT RPT NOT SHARE VIEW THAT QADHAFI'S ABSENCE FROM TRIPOLI 4TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS WAS "DIPLOMATIC". MESTIRI SAID QADHAFI DID HAVE BAD CASE OF UPSET STOMACH.
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